

SALT



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Volume 1 Number 1

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SALT

Volume 1 Number 1 – Series: *Studies in Fundamental Beliefs*

PRESIDENT'S PIECE

“O Lord, Revive Your work..” Hab 3:2

Consider for a moment our Conference theme, “O Lord, Revive Your work”. What are we implying when we apply it to our Conference? Are we suggesting that our Conference lacks vitality or is seemingly lifeless, or perhaps near to death?

I was an ambulance officer for nineteen years and during that time I am reasonably sure that I never saw a patient brought back from the dead. Now Lazarus was in the grave for four days and Christ raised him from death, but as wonderful as our medical profession may be, no rational physician would attempt a resuscitation even four hours after apparent death. My private conclusion is that anyone who is resuscitated by medical intervention was never truly dead in the first place. Yes, the signs of life may be absent, but if a potential exists for the continuation of life then that person is not yet deceased. When the spirit actually departs from the body it returns to God who gave it, (Eccl 12:7) and no amount of medical intervention can summon it back. Doctors can artificially circulate the blood, enrich it with oxygen, and correct the body's chemical imbalances but they cannot therein guarantee a restoration of life.

Habakkuk prayed this prayer of revival at the time of Judah's lowest spiritual ebb. His prayer was not that the nation would be brought back to life. Judah was anything but dead. It had not yet been invaded by the Babylonians. If we look closely at Habakkuk's words we can see that his prayer is for the revival of God's *work* among the people – that is, that they would submit to His rulership and be spared His wrath. Why Habakkuk felt it was necessary to have a revival of God's work in Judah is clearly evident from the opening paragraphs of his book.

Hab 1:2-4 How long, O LORD, will I call for help,

And Thou wilt not hear?
I cry out to Thee, “Violence!” Yet Thou dost not save.
Why dost Thou make me see iniquity, And cause *me* to look on wickedness?
Yes, destruction and violence are before me; Strife exists and contention arises.
Therefore, the law is ignored And justice is never upheld.
For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore, justice comes out perverted.

Do you see any better situation in society today? Have you ever watched the six o'clock news without being bombarded with a barrage of graphic reports of violence and rebellion? Take a wander down the aisles of the toy section of your favourite department store and you'll be amazed at the array of violent figurines and lethal accessories that stare back at you with realistic expressions of anger. As we look around us we see a world in defiant rejection of that which it needs the most – the peace and rulership of our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ. If ever there has been a time when God's people needed to return to Him it is now. What we earnestly pray for is an outpouring of God's Holy Spirit to revitalize and empower His work in the world today particularly in this case through our Australasian Conference of Seventh Day Baptists. Like Habakkuk we may wonder at times whether or not our Heavenly Father is listening, but we should never think that God has given up on us. (Heb 13:5) When the going gets tough we should ask ourselves the question that the hymnist put so eloquently:

Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb,
And shall I fear to own His cause
Or blush to speak His name?

Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize
And sailed thro' bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy word. AMEN.

Sure we may be a little battle-scarred here and there, but we're alive! Our admission of a need for a revival of God's work amongst us is an urgent plea for His help not a fear that God's Spirit may have abandoned us. We are alive – simply because God's Spirit quickens us. Without the Spirit we would be mere animated corpses. If God's Spirit could leave

us no amount of motivational speeches or renewal programs could ever bring us back to life. Like the doctors and nurses who do their best to stabilize their critical patient, we must acknowledge that God's own work is ultimately in His hands. It's His work. We should then be confident to say with the Apostle Paul,

Phil 1:6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

In my next *President's Piece* we will discuss how we can best prepare ourselves to be used by our Master to further His work and bring about a revival of God's work amongst us.

David Hill



Welcome to the beginning of our venture into printing. The concept of SALT has been around for many years in our church at Auckland. To be able to open a forum on our belief system, I believe, is healthy and challenging. I hope that in subsequent issues we can print readers' responses without fear or favour. My personal thoughts were to take over the Gospel Messenger which Pastor Edward Barrar has published for many years. However, this did not seem to be possible so SALT is the result of many e-mails and discussion.

The primary aim of SALT is to bring the Gospel to a dying world. Its second aim is to publish what we in Auckland believe as Seventh Day Baptists, so that others can agree or disagree. We are not trying to force our beliefs on others, only hoping to foster open discussion on doctrine. A third aim is to bring news of our mission work in Malawi.

We hope you accept this publication in the spirit it has been established and we hope to have your written responses so they can be printed.

May God bless us with unity and love in the years to come.

Pastor Ian Ingoe



SALT is published by the Auckland Seventh Day Baptist Church. It is hoped that the content of this publication will serve to enlighten Christians of all denominational persuasions, if not to a new understanding of the fundamentals of the Christian faith then at least to an understanding of the points of view espoused by those who identify themselves as Seventh Day Baptists. It will become clear on reading the articles in this first issue that no individual Seventh Day Baptist speaks for every Seventh Day Baptist on those matters of doctrine of which Scripture does not speak explicitly. This concept has been called 'liberty of conscience'. It is therefore necessary to reiterate that no statements made in this series are intended to be taken as the fixed opinion of every Seventh Day Baptist. Consequently discussion on any topic appearing in this series is encouraged and where possible, replies will appear in subsequent issues. However,

this magazine reserves the right to withhold from publication any correspondence in whole or in part. Topics to be addressed in this series will follow the article headings in the Australasian Conference of Seventh Day Baptists Statement of Belief (1998). Copies of this Statement are obtainable from the addresses below:

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Sandringham
AUCKLAND
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Australian Secretary
Australasian Conference of Seventh Day Baptists
10 Wirilda Court
CAPALABA Qld

The Church

David Hill

Have you ever been asked, “Which Church do you belong to?” Many would respond to this question with the name of a denomination or religious body, and this is typically the anticipated answer.

Church in the English language has become a word that describes a variety of concepts including a building, a Christian worship service, or a religious institution. Consequently, unless we make a careful study of what the Bible means by *church*, our understanding may inherently be misshapen by various applications of the term in our everyday language. Do Christians need to *belong* to a church? Are they even required by God to regularly attend a church service?

The Scriptural Meaning of Church

Church is a word used in Scripture, yet its biblical meaning is not properly conveyed by any of the meanings of our common speech. In the New Testament, “church” translates the Greek word *ekklesia* - a term used for an *assemblage, gathering, or meeting*. While *ekklesia* may be used in a general sense, it is more often used as a special term denoting an assembly of Christians. This *assembly* refers to (a) a local congregation and to (b) the whole company of God’s people as a single group.

When Scripture refers to the church in the sense of a local congregation it most frequently speaks of the common actions of the individuals of a group rather than to the actions of a single corporate entity. Thus the church is said to suffer persecution, to fear, hear, speak, make judgments, and to pray. The church assembles, it comes together, it greets and is greeted,



it is edified and nurtured by Christ. Hence the local church is not an impersonal institution like a bank or trading company.

The whole company of God’s people, or *the universal Church*, as some have called it, is represented metaphorically by the term *Body of Christ*. When Christ declared, “... I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it”, he did not say *churches*. Christ is said to be the Head of his Body (not bodies *plural*) which is also pictured in the singular as his Bride whom he loves. Individual members of this body are likened to the codependent

limbs and organs of the human body. What then is the relationship between the all encompassing assembly of God’s people and the local assemblies?

Since all local assemblies of Christians are members together in the universal Church of God we may be tempted to jump to a hierarchical interpretation of the Church wherein the local bodies are merely subsets which together make up the whole. But this would be contrary to the view portrayed by the biblical metaphors and images of the Christian Church. The very personal nature of Christ’s one-on-one marital relationship with his Church renders it quite inappropriate to understand the Church in terms of a three-tiered religious institution incorporating the Church, the churches, and the people.

In 1 Corinthians 12:13 Paul writes, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body”. If baptism of the Spirit incorporates us into the Body of Christ individually, it is evident then that the Church is a community of believers who, individually and corporately, have a special, spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ. This important element should not be overlooked in a comprehensive definition of the Church. Restrained by the limitations of geography, Christians will unite together at a local level to interact within this special relationship. However this necessity in no way divides the spiritual Body of Christ which is, by its nature, unbound by physical re-

strictions. It is a sad reality that doctrinal differences will inevitably arise and some may even cause a division in the local fellowship. However, such differences should not become the means by which lines of division are seemingly drawn across the Body of Christ. Siblings are not excluded from the family when they squabble with one another. Paul's question "Is Christ divided?" is not a lament in recognition of the onset of inevitable schism, but rather suggests that factions among men at a carnal level cannot dismember the Body of Christ at the spiritual level.

From earliest times, individual Christians separated from each other for at least three reasons. Some gathered under the leadership of a particular charismatic individual, others parted on account of differences in doctrinal beliefs, and yet others for the sake of particular practices. By the time of the reign of Emperor Constantine in the fourth century A.D., Christians were a very mixed bag of beliefs and customs. This diversity is clearly evident in the writings of the Ante-Nicene Church Fathers. Constantine made a concerted effort to bring Roman-style uniformity to the various Christian factions throughout the Empire. Despite his efforts to create a single "superchurch" and the later efforts of the Papacy throughout the dark ages to maintain Catholic orthodoxy, many of the more isolated churches faithfully preserved the apostolic teachings and practices.

The Anabaptist View of Church

One group of Christians in particular, the Anabaptists, suffered

indescribable persecutions at the hands of the Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed Churches. They rose spontaneously at the time of the Reformation in several different areas and around the same time due to the growing availability of the Scriptures in the language of people. Like the Waldenses before them they were committed to the study of the Bible and sought to put its teachings into practice despite the contrary teachings of Church tradition. To State Churches the most detestable of their doctrines was embodied in their concept of the Church. From the Scriptures the Anabaptists had learned that baptism into the Body of Christ was the work of the Spirit and could only be realized upon a personal belief in Jesus Christ and an identification in faith with His death and Resurrection. The Anabaptists saw that, for an infant, this step of faith apart from the required understanding and knowledge of the gospel and repentance from sin, was impossible. Therefore they considered that infant baptism was a meaningless and ineffectual ritual. Further to this, they considered that the Church of God was comprised, not of all those who had been baptized by the priest, but rather, was restricted to those persons who had truly converted and were showing in their lives the fruits of a genuine repentance. The State-organized Church therefore was not God's Church but a pretender with no inherent authority to dictate its manmade doctrines and traditions to God's true people. Anabaptists, Baptists, and those who agree with this basic concept of the church, believe that the Holy Spirit is their Teacher and that every individual in whom the

Spirit resides is capable of being instructed by the Spirit in matters of faith and practice. They reject the need for a priest to interpret the Holy Scriptures and hence advocate the priesthood of all believers.

As the political powers of the State Churches have decreased in recent years through the increased secularization of Western society, the State Churches have been relegated to the status of mere religious organizations - as indeed they are. A number of Christian denominations and many individuals have now adopted the Anabaptist concept of the Church and firmly believe that it best represents the original teachings of the Bible. Thus we hold that:

12. The Church

We believe that the church of God is all redeemed believers gathered together by the Holy Spirit and joined into one body, of which Christ is the Head. We also believe that the local church is a community of believers organised in covenant relationship for worship, fellowship and service, practising and proclaiming common convictions, while growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We believe in the priesthood of all believers and practise the autonomy of the local congregation, as we seek to work in association with others for more effective witness.

Acts 20:28; 2:42; 1 Cor 12:13,14,27; Col 1:18; Rom 12:4,5; 15:5-7; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Matt 18:20; Eph 2:19-22; 4:11-16; 2 Peter 3:18; Heb 10:24,25.

Our Creed is NO Creed?

An Extract from *A Manual of Procedures for Seventh Day Baptist Churches* with an Editorial Introduction and Conclusion.

“Seventh Day Baptists consider liberty of thought, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to be essential to Christian belief and practice. We therefore encourage the unhindered study and open discussion of Scripture, and uphold the individual's freedom of conscience in seeking to understand and obey the will of God. It is for this reason that we have no binding creed.

We hold, however, that certain beliefs and practices, having the support of Scripture, and adhered to by the followers of Christ through the centuries, are binding upon all.

With this conviction in mind, we present the following brief statement, derived from our understanding of the Bible, as an expression of our common belief.

2 Cor. 3:17,18; 2Tim 2:15; 3:16,17; Rom 12:2; 10:17; Eph 4:3-6,15.”

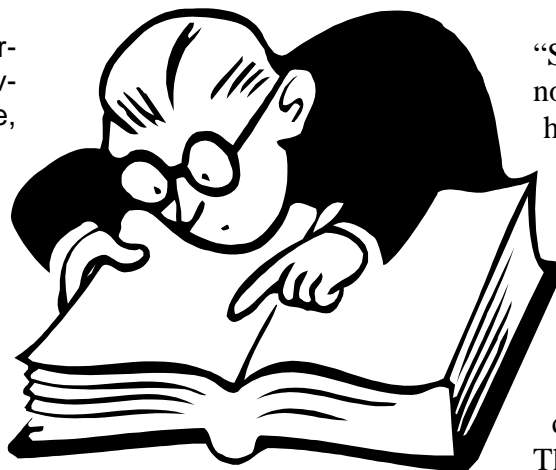
In this article we study the historic significance of this non-creedal principle and endeavour to confirm its conformity with the teaching of Scripture.

The Non-Creedal Principle

A prominent Sabbatarian scholar recently made these startling comments.

“Some time ago I was invited by the Seventh-day Baptist Church to speak in Rhode Island at a rally of about 50 of their pastors from the Eastern States. As I listened to the pastors discussing some of their doctrinal beliefs, it soon became evident that there was a great diversity of beliefs and great freedom in interpreting the nature of

the Gospel. Even the Sabbath was viewed by some more as a holiday than a holy day. When I asked them how did they feel about so much diversity in their church, one of them replied: "This is what makes our Seventh-day Baptist Church great. Members can believe and do what they like and still be members of the church." Do doctrinal diversity and moral permissiveness really make a



church great?... The more permissive your church becomes in its beliefs and practices, the more it will lose its identity, mission, and purpose for existence.”

What concerns me as a Seventh Day Baptist is the misrepresented viewpoint expressed in the quote "Members can believe and do what they like and still be members of the church." Although this statement may have been reported accurately, my objection to it is that the statement is not representative of the denominational stand on belief and practice.

At the outset we need to understand that the freedom that Seventh Day Baptists have *is not, and never has been,* the freedom to believe and do whatever

you like.

For an understanding of what Seventh Day Baptists mean by the "Non-Creedal Principle" we quote from *A Manual of Procedures for Seventh Day Baptist Churches*, a publication which has been widely accepted in Seventh Day Baptist Circles.

“Seventh Day Baptists are a non-creedal people. For one hundred and sixty years after the organisation of their first church in America, they set forth no statement of their beliefs lest the result become a binding creed. Indeed, they studiously avoided doing anything of the kind.

They guarded their hard-won freedom of conscience so carefully that they would not lay down a statement of beliefs for anyone, including themselves. If a person were penitent for sin, accepted Christ as Saviour and guide, was immersed in water, kept the Sabbath and took the Bible as his rule of faith and conduct, what more could be asked of him? The way they felt about it was clearly stated in 1811: any prescription of man... as to rules of faith and morals (are generally esteemed) not only useless but nearly presumptuous. And notwithstanding they are harmoniously agreed in the important, fundamental and essential points of the Christian Religion; yet as to smaller matters and mere circumstantial

points there may be a great variety of beliefs.

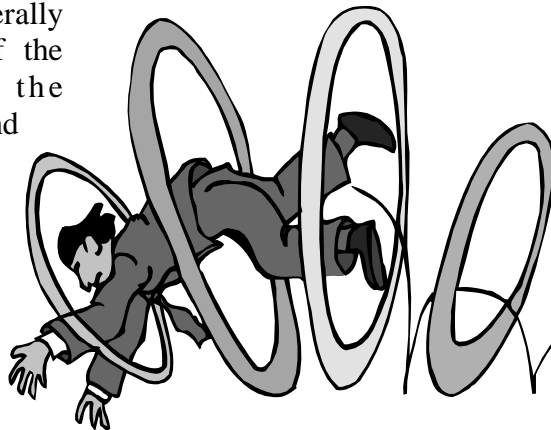
As the years passed, however, and Seventh Day Baptists lost immediate and personal contact with each other in their movement westward, the need was increasingly evident for a statement of faith. Consequently, at the General Conference session of 1831, a committee was appointed to draft an expose of faith. The report of this committee was received and placed on file in 1833; two years later it was adopted as representing what Seventh Day Baptists generally believed. The wording of the resolution reflects the non-creedal principle and defines the title word, expose:

...not that it should be a yoke of bondage, but that it might show the excellency of the Gospel as taught by them and be a guide to those desiring to found Seventh Day Baptist churches.

In 1852 the question was revived in the General Conference session and certain amendments were voted to the Expose of 1833. Immediately following this action, the Conference passed a clear definition of its function: **RESOLVED**, That this expose is not adopted as having any binding force in itself, but simply as an exhibition of the views held by the denomination. In 1880, the General Conference adopted a new statement, calling it the Seventh Day Baptist Expose of Faith and Practice. At the General Conference of 1935, a teacher of a Bible class in a local Seventh Day Baptist church

presented a resolution stating his conclusion that the time had come to consider the preparation of a new statement of belief. A committee was appointed, and in 1937 the General Conference adopted a Statement of Belief under eleven titles; the four members of the committee differed widely from each other in theological orientation. This document has been amended slightly and studied widely and critically, but it remains the current exposition.

When a group of people have



covenanted together in the presence of God to form a congregation, they usually discover a need to define their faith, both for their own and their children's welfare and as a statement to the public of that for which they stand. Since 1937 it has often been the action of the church to affirm, "we agree with the Seventh Day Baptist Statement of Belief." Sometimes they have written their own, using the Statement as a guide.

Statement of Belief of Seventh Day Baptists

The Statement of Belief has no binding force upon churches or individuals. The preamble, under the titles "General Statement" and "Polity" serve to save it from creedal

implications. Seventh Day Baptist have no creed save the Bible, and no creedal test save a regenerate heart, baptism, the Sabbath, and a Christian life.

(i) General Statement

Seventh Day Baptists cherish liberty of thought as an essential condition for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Therefore they have no binding creed to which members must subscribe. They hold, however, that certain beliefs and practices, having the support of Scripture and adhered to be the followers of Christ through the centuries, are binding upon all Christians. Among these are the following which they hold to be fundamental.

These statements approved by Conference are passed on to the churches for such action as the Holy Spirit shall lead them to take. It is believed they will be helpful in training the children in religion, in establishing the young people in the fundamentals of Christian faith, in deepening the work of God's grace in all our people, and in making these essential Christian truths known to others.

(ii) Polity

The Seventh Day Baptist denomination is historically, like other Baptists, congregational in polity, and desires that its churches and its members shall continue to enjoy freedom of conscience in all matters of religion. Therefore, the Statement of Belief here set forth is simply an exhibition of the views generally held by Seventh Day Baptists and is not adopted as having binding force in itself. Matthew 18:15-29; Luke 22:23-27; Acts 6:1-6;

2:44,45; Colossians 3:15-17; I Peter 5:1-5.”

SDB aversion to Creeds

Why did the early SDBs object to a Statement of Belief? The answer lies in the historical roots of the English Sabbatarians, who, under threat of prison and sometimes death held their Sabbath Meetings despite the Act of Uniformity (Conformity) 1662, which required that all clergy use and subscribe to the Book of Common Prayer and The Conventicle Act of 1664 which set penalties for attending non-Anglican religious services.

For these persecuted brethren, fellowship was a privilege and was conducted at times with necessary discretion. These churches were organised locally wherever the opportunity arose, and in all practice and belief were autonomous.

Consequently a denominational creed or "Statement of Uniformity" was neither welcome nor possible without the prior establishment of a denominational hierarchy.

After the threat of persecution had subsided churches met together for fellowship and support. Yearly meetings developed into the first General Conference which was organised in America in 1801. The newly formed General Conference was not hierarchical and never has been. Seventh Day Baptist polity opposes a mirroring of the Papal hierarchical system. Throughout their history SDB Conferences have neither legislated nor enforced creedal tests.

A hierarchically organised church has the power to change the doctrine and beliefs of its

church. The SDBs as a denomination do not have such power. Their sole Head whom they share with the rest of the Church of the God is Jesus Christ. Seventh Day Baptists cooperate to form associations of local churches rather than to create a single organised entity which may seek to enforce particular beliefs and practices. Our freedom is not that we may believe whatever we wish, but rather that we may follow the conviction of the Holy Spirit in accordance with the teachings of the Bible even when these convictions are not shared by a fellow member. Thus all beliefs are personally appropriated and founded upon the Word of God rather than on Church Councils or creeds. It is through the instruction of the Holy Spirit that a Seventh Day Baptist should grow in wisdom and truth. It is evident from the biblical record of the early church that the Spirit did not reveal all truths to all the apostles at the same time. Paul at one time had a different understanding to Peter and Barnabas and Paul took that opportunity to share this knowledge with his brethren. (Gal 2:11-19) Peter had a different level of revelation on prophecy and the end times than did Paul. And to John on Patmos even greater insights into the events of the last days were revealed.

Likewise we do not expect that our brothers and sisters will have exactly the same convictions and understanding as we do. They may have more; they may have less. No hierarchy can impose spiritual understanding. Toleration of different views is necessary for personal growth and corporate learning. Church history records numerous examples of authoritarian

leaders who dictated to their flock without toleration of diversity. This approach inevitably leads to the persecution of "heretics" by excommunications, tortures, punishments, imprisonments, and the martyring of the saints.

We should always be free to hold to the truth of a teaching or to discard it in the same way as the Bereans did.

"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few." Acts 17:10-12 (KJV)

Hard won Freedom

The "freedom" that an SDB has also brings with it the responsibility of searching out answers from the Scriptures under the guidance of the Spirit. This freedom has been bought with blood and tears. It is the precious possession of God's people. Yet for many people this freedom is too difficult. They would much rather have a priest, a theologian or "prophet" dictate to them. This takes the responsibility for discernment of the truth away from the individual and places it back onto the church organization - a much more comfortable position. The soft option is to belong to a "set of beliefs". It does not challenge the mind or rend the soul. But obedience to a man-made church is not the same as obedience to God.

Reader Responses welcome!

A Royal Priesthood and Congregational Polity

by John Conrod

Over the almost four centuries of our existence Seventh Day Baptists have always held that speaking out boldly to a lost world about the need for repentance of sin and acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord should always be first and foremost in importance. Our often unique position in Christian ecclesiastical settings has often called us to defend a second Biblical truth. We have often found it necessary to call the attention of Christians to the need to observe the seventh day of the week as God's ordained and commanded day for our worship as part of our love for and recognition of Jesus as our Lord and the Lord of the Sabbath.

We sometimes overlook a third unique cause that often also calls out for support- to remind Christians that God has also called them to be "a royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9) which includes how Christians should relate to each other and to God in their church polity. The question that begs to be answered is- "How Should the Church of Christ be governed?"

Church government has been an issue within the Church since it began. When Jesus said that He would build His Church and give it the "keys to the kingdom," did He intend for it to have a single autocratic ruler or even a government of apostles and elders? Or did He want His Church governed by all its members equally?

Some churches are convinced

that the Bible teaches the church should be governed in a hierarchical structure from the top down. This has clearly been the structure of the Roman Catholic Church with the Pope as the Vicar of Christ. Other churches still believing in a hierarchical structure for church government do not have just one man at the top wielding all the power. They have a governing Board of Elders that make the decisions for the church. The third type of church government is followed by congregational churches and is a democracy of all members.

We must not allow humanly devised theories of church government replace the clear teachings of the Word of God. The question to be answered is- "Does the Bible set out a clear directive for the governing of the church?" Let us look first at Acts 15.

"And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, [and said], Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. -Acts 15:1-2.

It is clear that the matter in dispute should be brought to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem.

"And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and [of] the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them." -Acts 15:4
Note now that not just the apostles and elders were present but that it says the whole Jerusalem church "received them."

"Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them." -Acts 15:12
What multitude? Why the whole church body of verse 4 of course.

"Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; [namely], Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: And they wrote [letters] by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren [send] greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:" -Acts 15:22-23

Note that the suggestion of James was not only acceptable to the "apostles and elders," but also had the approval of "the whole church" and the letter was sent in the name of "the apostles and elders and brethren." Even churches that are governed by elders admit that "correct church government should always be based on mul-

titude of counsel." The real question is- how many church members does it take to be called a "multitude"?

Clearly, Jesus Christ is the "Head" of the Church and the rest of us are "members of His body." At no time did Jesus ever appoint any man to be the head of His body. It is also true that He chose group of apostles to serve His people. But notice what Jesus said was expected of them- They were not to be like the world in their leadership. They were to be humble servants.

Christ warned His disciples that they should not act like a lord making "final decisions" in deciding doctrinal or even administrative matters. He said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you" (Matt. 20:25-28).

An honest study of the New Testament Church in the book of Acts will show that there is no mention of apostles and elders making important doctrinal or administrative decisions without the agreement of the whole church.

Earlier when seven deacons were chosen, they may have been "ordained" by the apostles but they were chosen by "the multitude of the disciples" (Acts 6:2) Again we ask the question- what constitutes a "multitude"?

God's form of government for the nation of Israel was a theocracy. Under this theocracy God was King (Judges 8:22-23; 1 Sam. 12:12). Moses was only a prophet. At Mount Sinai God sought a direct relationship with

the people.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. . . . And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw [it], they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. - Exodus 19:10-11;20:18-19

Note that It was the people who refused that relationship out of fear. They wanted Moses to continue to be a "go between" for them. Moses became a "mediator" and occupied a position unparalleled by anyone until Jesus Himself (cf. Deut. 34:10; 18:15-19). Even with that unique position, there is nothing in God's Word that gave Moses authority to function in a priestly ministry over Israel. And now under the New Covenant all believers are called "a holy priesthood." When it came time for Joshua to relinquish his role as the leader of Israel, did he appoint a successor? He did not.

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that [were]

on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods; . . . And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that [was] by the sanctuary of the LORD. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God. So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance." -Joshua 24:14-16,24-28

Joshua gathered the people together and asked them to make a choice- "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." If that doesn't sound like a plenary decision, what does?

When Judges were ruling Israel there were at times multiple judges and sometimes no judges at all. Was there a board of elders that appointed these judges? No. Many times the people just "did what was right in their own eyes" which would have worked if they actually were doing what was right. At this time God dealt directly with His people.

When Israel later had a human king, this wasn't what God wanted. It was a rejection of

God's direct rulership (1 Sam. 8:6-7). God did not want the people looking to human leadership, it was the people who chose that. Even then the kings of Israel were not allowed to function as priestly intermediates.

In the New Covenant it is clear that God wants to have a direct relationship with all His people. By using a congregational form of government, rather than a government by intermediators, we can allow each member to have a direct relationship with God. God has often used human servants as His representatives when the people didn't listen and didn't want to listen to Him. He used kings and prophets and priests and apostles and elders and yes even Babylonians. But these aren't His preferences. He wants a "priesthood of the believers." He longs for a direct connection with each of us. It is CONTRARY to the clear Old and New Testament patterns of God's relationships with His people to adopt anything but a DEMOCRATIC form of church government! Only congregational polity puts each person in a direct relationship with God.

Is this different from the Old Testament? Not at all. God did not want human rule then and He doesn't want it now. To want human intermediators is to deny that Christ is actively filling these roles in our personal and ecclesiastical lives. Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant, the supreme Judge, the High Priest and the King. We are all appointed to be a "royal priesthood" with a relationship with the Father that is only mediated through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:9, 1 Timothy 2:5).

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THE SEVEN R'S OF REPENTANCE

Barbara Eldred

My friend Roz, (her real name, she is happy for me to tell her story) committed a major sin in her youth. She committed the sin of fornication - that is having sex before marriage. She became pregnant. In those days this occurrence was frowned on by society so Roz went to New Zealand for a long holiday to have the baby, which was adopted out. She later married and had four other children. Still later she became a Christian. She became fiercely defensive of her daughters' "honour" and very vocal about the horrible the sins of fornication and adultery, quoting the Bible freely.

The trouble was that all her friends knew about her past life and sneered or laughed at her hypocrisy and double standards even though she pointed out that she acknowledged she had sinned she had repented and God had forgiven her.

So what is this repentance that Roz talked about. There are seven aspects of repentance.

1) REGRET

Genesis 4:3-12 Cain is confronted by God about his sin of murder. He answers with rebellion and so is judged by God and condemned to banishment. In *Genesis 4:13-14* Cain said to the Lord "My punishment is worse than I can stand. See thou hast driven me from the land and I shall be hidden from

Thy face. etc" Cain was certainly suffering but he was only sorry for the effect his action had had on himself. There is no acknowledgment of his contribution to the problem or the effect of his action on others. His only reaction is self-pity and regret.

2) REMORSE

This is the emotion felt when a person suffers and feels sorry for the effect his action has had on another person. *Mathew 27:3-5. When Judas, His betrayer, saw that He was condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood"*

3) REPENT

This is when you acknowledge that what you have done is intrinsically wrong. You're sorry for the effect that your action has had on God, and usually on others and yourself as well.

The word repent comes from the Latin root *re-* meaning again and *penteo* which means "I think" so to repent means to think again or to rethink or to change one's mind about something.

The Greek word translated repent, *metanoia* is made up of two words, *meta* meaning amid and *noia* meaning to exercise the mind. So to repent in Greek means to exercise the mind in

the middle of something.

In Hebrew the word for repent comes from a root word meaning to sigh or breathe heavily. When you realise that you have done something wrong you feel sorry, for whatever reason, and think "Oh no" with an exhalation of breath. True repentance can be like grief in that you have to come to terms with a new situation and this can be very painful, especially because the cause of the change is of your own actions. One of the body's ways of dealing with the stress of change is to sigh. A sob is really a violent sigh. The same Hebrew word is translated differently in different contexts. *1 Samuel 15:35* To feel sorry *Exodus 32:14* Change their mind

Genesis 6:6 wished he hadn't, felt grieved

The other nuance of this word is "to comfort" another in grief.

Genesis 37:35 His sons and daughters did their best to console him

Genesis 27:42 See, your brother is consoling (comforting) himself

When you console another you are sighing with them and helping them to adjust their thinking to the new situation. They are rethinking or repenting. So true repentance involves an element of grief and a change in thinking. *Psalms 32:3-4* captures this process beautifully.

So how could God call David a man after His own heart while poor old Saul was condemned? Surely David's sin was much greater than Saul's, with much wider ramifications? In *I Samuel 13:6-12* we see that Saul had sinned by usurping the role of the prophet by offering the sacrifice. When confronted by Samuel about his sin he did two things, which are diagnostic for discerning true repentance rather than regret, or remorse. Firstly he blamed others; the people were deserting, and secondly he made excuses claiming that he acted for noble reasons against his better judgement, for the good others "I forced myself", as if this makes a difference. There is no acknowledgment of his sin here, not even at the regret level. All he has is excuses. In *I Samuel 15:1-3* Saul is instructed to destroy all Amalek has. It is spelled out completely in verse 3. It is not very pleasant but there is no room for confusion. Yet in verse 7 we see that Saul and the people spared Amalek and the best of the flocks. Again when confronted by Samuel (*verse 14*) Saul blames the people again. He has not learned anything from his previous experience. This time his noble motives are to do God a favour. Samuel gives him a second chance (*verses 17-19*) but Saul still makes excuses.

Verse 24 finally shows us some acknowledgment of his sin but there are still excuses until in *verse 25* we see the real reason why he has submitted and acknowledged his sin. He wants to still be allowed to worship the Lord. So his reaction is, at best, regret not repentance as he is sorry for the effect his action has had on him alone. Saul

never did acknowledge his sin and his downward progression is recorded for all to see.

On the other hand David's story is quite different. The sin is there in *II Samuel 11 and 12* for all to see and is probably greater than Saul's sin. Nathan challenged David just as Samuel challenged Saul in *II Samuel 12:13*. David immediately confessed before Nathan and simply said, "*I have sinned against the Lord.*". *Psalm 51* encapsulates this process. There are no excuses, no blame of others, no



prevarications. Simply "*I have sinned*". *Psalm 32:1-7* records his depression (sighing and sadness) as he lives with his guilt and then his joy and relief as he acknowledges his sinful nature to the Lord and is free of it. We see the same situation with Peter when confronted by the load of fish after the realisation of his rebellion at Jesus telling him to cast the nets again. "*Leave me, Lord, for I am a sinful man*".

Job 42:6 shows the same understanding as Job realises his arrogance in the face of The Almighty's power and majesty "*Wherefore I retract and repent in dust and ashes*". There are no excuses, no blame, no noble motives, just a rethinking, a change of perception "*Now my*

eyes see thee", a new understanding. Repentance.

4) RETURN OR RESTORE

All through the prophets we have the concept of repent and turn from you idols, from your ways, from your lifestyles, from other gods, God from His anger. The next step in the process is action. Repentance is always followed by an action of restoration or return. *Luke 19:1-9* shows us Zacchaeus as he comes down from the tree saying "*if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold*". Here is repentance and then restoration. In fact it was by the action Jesus knew that there had been true repentance because the fruit was obvious. In *verse 9* Jesus says, "*This day salvation has come to this house..*". *Acts 2:38* says "*Repent and be baptised*" - Do something to show your repentance. *Acts 26:20* *Repent and turn to God and do works consistent with your repentance.* *Judges 21:6* Israel repented of their action against the Benjaminites so they did something to restore them. *II Samuel 24*. David sinned by taking the census. Repentance gave him forgiveness from God but the consequences continued. David then worked hard to restore the status quo by purchasing land for an altar and insisted that he pay for it himself making the point very forcefully (*verse 24*) that his repentance must involve some cost to him.

It seems that the level of restoration needs to be on the same level as the sin, hence David's obvious and public repentance with the altar for the public sin and the more private repentance and grief with the fast etc. over the death of the child.

5) REDEEM

This is God's work and only He knows exactly what happens there. All we know is that it does take place. Praise God!!

6) REMOVE

Zechariah 3:9 I will remove the iniquity of the land in one day.

Hebrews 10:17 And their sins and iniquities I will remember no more.

Psalms 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Psalms 51:9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

II Corinthians 5:19 -not imputing their trespasses unto them -

Somehow sins are removed by God, washed away, blotted out, forgotten, turned away from, stricken from the record. The sad story of David and Bathsheba is told in *II Samuel 11 and 12*. This period in David's life is covered in *I Chronicles 18-20*. However the Chronicles record is God's record of the history of His people and it contains absolutely no mention of David's great sin. It is not there. It no longer exists in God's eyes. It has been stricken from the record. It was as if he had never sinned. Could Paul have done all he did, could he have stood and preached, put himself in a position where he could be criticised and vilified knowing his past, if he did not know absolutely that his record had been wiped clean?

When my son Douglas was a child, I had lost my temper with him one night and treated him roughly. Riddled with guilt the next morning at prayer time, I

repented wholeheartedly. While I was praying there was a nudge at my knee as a sleepy child disturbed me. Picking him up I said, "I'm sorry for what I did last night." "What did you do?" he said. He, like God, had forgotten. It was as if I had never sinned.

7) RENEW

II Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold all things become new.

Galatians 2:20 The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith of the Son of God -

Psalms 51:7-17 Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit in me.

So we have a second chance. We are given a new life, a new start. We are new creatures with a fresh slate. *Romans 12:2* tells us how to live this new life "by the renewing of your minds". What is this, but telling us to change our thought patterns, change our minds, to rethink, thus bringing us full circle to repentance; only now we have a long term and ongoing process which will need to take place each time we sin. Sustained release repentance.

The process of renewing our minds must be continuous as the old nature keeps pulling us back into old habits and thought patterns and we often need to repent many times and consciously manage our thoughts until the new habits are set in place. *James 4:7* tells us to *Resist the devil and he will flee from you*". This resistance begins in our thoughts.

So Roz was right. In God's eyes and in her eyes she had never

sinned and she lived her life on that basis. She now has five children. One holiday we were joyously introduced to her "new" daughter and her husband and their children. She now has a great relationship with her lost daughter and her husband, their two children, the father of the girl and his wife, the adoptive parents and their family. Her realisation that her new start was real and her courage to live that knowledge has brought such love to the extended family and all who knew her and been a living witness to God's love and forgiveness if they choose to see it.

We, on earth, knew Roz had sinned. Those around us know all too well we have all sinned but if we have truly repented God does not mean we have a licence to continue to sin. If we have truly been through the repentance process we will be only too aware how painful sin is to think about deliberately sinning again. God is not patient with deliberate sin.

So this is why God could say that David was a man after His own heart. In God's eyes he was. We, on earth, know he was an adulterer, a murderer, a liar, a poor parent, a lousy husband, a thief, a rebel, a brigand, whatever. But David believed his God and accepted his forgiveness and maintained his relationship with God and God called him righteous. And so he was. He then went on to live his faith by praising God and seeking to extend His kingdom whenever he could.

II Corinthians 7:8-11

Reader Responses welcome!

Mission Report

REPORT ON MY TRIP TO MALAWI:

Pr. Ian Ingoe

When the plane landed at Johannesburg I was a little nervous with all the stories I had heard of violence in that city but I should not have been concerned.. Reg (Mr. Richter) was there to meet me and offered me hospitality and his help for the week. He drove me wherever I needed to go. I was able to purchase a Volksie Bus (VW 10 seater) with a trailer. I also had to purchase paper , a fax, tyres, printer and many other items. this with a few problems was completed by Friday morning . On the Friday afternoon I drove to within 90 kms of the Zimbabwe border. I found a lodge and slept soundly thanking God for His help in the day's events. On Sunday I awoke at 5.30 and started another busy day of driving and border posts. Mozambique with its visa charges, car insurance and T.i.p costs was costing about NZ\$70 per hour

to drive the short distance. I finally reached the Malawi border at about lunchtime. I arrived at Bible College at about 4pm to be greeted by Pr Barrar who was sporting a full beard and was looking like a taller version of his father.

The gardens were looking very good although some maize was a little stunted. The new house that he had built was looking good and nearing completion. The main house is a very solid house although it has a few things needing to be done to bring it to a finished product as we would see it in NZ.

The local Pastor came to see us the next day and we planned a schedule for the students , Pr Barrar, Pr Mangazi and myself to visit the northern churches. This we started on the Wednesday at 4.30 am we set off for Lilongwe. We arrived a little after 8am at Mr Salema's house. That day we visited Mr Mungoni who took us to Capital Hill (Seat of Gov) to find out about the

church registration. Here we discovered that it was very close , in that the document was to be typed and presented to the minister for signing. That evening there was a local meeting of Christians. Although few in number Lilongwe has always had smaller numbers than other areas. The next day we went to Chiwowo and another small branch on the outskirts of Lilongwe. We were received well at both places. There were that night discussions with the BOT members Pr Barrar and myself until gone midnight.

The next day we went north where on the Friday we had a meeting at Jandala but I was also used to deliver an attempted suicide case to the hospital and police. The Sabbath we were at Dunduzu for a very successful meeting. The people here are very strong in that they will not be bullied by CAC.

For those who have not heard what is happening in the Ma-





lawi churches I will fill you in. As early as 1993 Christians within the Conference asked the leadership to be more accountable and to have an audit done of funds. This has never been done. The grass-roots Christians have slowly become dissatisfied with the leadership and their lack of accountability. The leadership of CAC then began to accuse the Concerned Christians, as they were named, of trying to divide Conference. Pr Siwani went to try to find out the problem but did not resolve the problem because the directions suggested by him were not followed. In 1997-98 the problem became worse because no-one would listen to the concerned Christians. CAC had managed through the unscrupulous misappropriation of funds to have a debt which the Missionary Society paid off. Bailing CAC executives out of their debt through mismanagement only bolstered the arrogance of the CAC power-base which then began to "excommunicate" churches who were associated with the Concerned brethren. These are faithful Christians who in certain areas number far more than those who continue to follow the corrupt CAC leaders. This is where the church is at present. There is a total split with the Central

African Conference and the Original Seventh Day Baptists who are at present being legally registered with the Government. Why has Pr Barrar started another Bible College? To help these hundreds if not thousands of Christians who have always been loyal to "Seventh Day Baptists" but have asked that the leadership be accountable. After my visit I am under no illusions that the Original Seventh Day Baptist are totally pure; there are some rogues amongst the membership. However, I am also sure that the way CAC are operating is not Christian. They have put themselves up as a hierarchy, not the servants of Conference. Tithes are being forcibly taken from churches who do not want CAC involved. Retired Pastors pensions have been stopped. Whole congregations have been locked out of their churches. (I have even heard the disturbing accusation that in two instances CAC leadership were reported to have used witchcraft to try to win the fight. In one of these cases the actual witchdoctor volunteered the information.) However, it was the village Christians whom I tried to listen to. They want Seventh Day Baptists to be as they should be, a democratic body not a dictatorship.

After Dunduzu we went to Uzumara and Khanga in the hills where we were received well. At Uzumara the church has a problem in that CAC have put a Pastor there but the church does not want him, they have Pr Mphande. I went to the Northern Association to see if I could offer help with our vehicle to transport the said Pastor. Pr Nantekwa and brother Phiri from CAC office were there and threatened to punch the man I was with. They were not willing to accept our help, so we left. The churches of Jandala, Khanga, Louwasi, Uzumara, Khanga, as I understood, had told the General Secretary not to include them on the role of CAC.

On the Monday we visited Louwasi and set off for Blantyre arriving about 3am. The next day I went to Mwanza to pick up our impounded paper.

On the Wednesday I visited Mphanga and Mphangala where I was received with great enthusiasm. On The Thursday we visited another seven churches with large amounts of people at four of them. At one church the problem was highlighted to me. When we arrived we were welcomed with singing by the children and the women. However, one man whose son

is the chairman of the BOT for CAC came and started arguing with the people I was with. It eventuated that we were locked out, so we preached under the tree nearby. It is a real battle and I'm not sure many people understand this. Pr Barrar was continuing with Bible College teaching while I was visiting these churches.

On Sabbath we all set off to Makapwa. This was a little sad for me but also a time of joy. Sadness because CAC have taken out an injunction against anyone connected with the Original Seventh Day Baptists from preaching in "their" church buildings. This meant I could not go to the church or the mission station. Pr Barrar also said he felt very sad as some 50 years earlier he built the first building on this station. However, we had God's people from the church in great numbers. We worshipped under the mango trees with I believe well over 350 people. So our joy came with seeing the people standing firm even though they had lost their place of worship but also all the funds they had accumulated. The majority were here under the trees and only a few people who worked for CAC at the church with Pr Pearson. I preached on Haggai and Acts 4:19-20 encouraging them to work and to preach the Gospel even though men may try to stop them from preaching. That afternoon we baptized 42 people. PTL

We arrived back at Lunzu after a brief meeting with Pr Pearson very tired. On the Sunday we had a BOT meeting and they set a target of

250,000 bricks for Bible College this season. My last preaching was at Ndirandi in Blantyre.

From Monday through to Thursday Pr Barrar and myself tried to do business in town. I believe that the visit had a positive effect on many Christians as I tried to assure them they were not alone, that the Australasian Conference were happy to support people who stood firm for God's commandments. They have felt a great disappointment with the Missionary Society in that they feel they have not been listened to and were deeply upset when the debt was paid and no-one was made accountable. From the information I was receiving there are many more people who want to join the Original SDBs but are just waiting for the registration. They are still a little disorganized but are trying to do things in a right manner. Obviously without the regular money from America they are having to do things on their own and we praise them for this.

The present situation in Zimbabwe should leave no-one in doubt as to how determined African leaders can be to hold on to power. Mugabe has systematically brought Zimbabwe to the point of bankruptcy. He saw from the referendum that he was losing his grip on power. So he immediately starts to attack the white farmers who love Zimbabwe. Make no mistake these thugs are paid by Mugabe's government. He will not relinquish his power without causing total division in the country and much bloodshed. I hope you see the striking similarities to

the CAC problem. We have had corrupt leadership who refuses to be accountable. Anyone who has asked to have accountability has been excommunicated. Who would you and your nation support in Zimbabwe - Mugabe or those who are being persecuted?

I ask all who read this report to pray for these dedicated Christians in Malawi. It was sad for me to be in a situation where my family and I had put so much effort in to Chipu, Thembe, Makapwa and I was not allowed to even visit the churches I built. May God bring His peace to the work there.

The Bible College started with 9 students. 4 decided the fringe benefits were better at Makapwa with Pr Pearson; if money is their incentive they will not make good pastors. One other student returned home because his English was not good enough. This leaves 4:

Mr Willie Tnjobvu
Makapwa SDB church

Mr Daniel R.B. Wolani
Mapanga Church

Mr Simon D.J. Mhango
Dunduzu Church

Mr Harold F. Chiwalo
Mapanga Church

Three are married with children and at present there is no support for the wives apart from the local church. These married men are very strong to do what they are doing. Please pray for them and their

families. Immediate needs for the Bible College:

- ? **Sponsors for all students at \$600 per year.**
- ? **Building programme for married quarters— Approx. \$8000.**
- ? **Vehicle running expenses—Approx \$2600 per annum**
- ? **Church building programme— ie displaced Christians approx \$400 - 500 per church**

I can assure everyone that Pr Barrar is not living a life of luxury. In fact many of us would find it hard to live how he has. I mention this to let you know that whatever is given is spent wisely.

Prayer & Praise

The Australasian Conference of Seventh Day Baptists' website is up and running.

It features a Youth Page with a discussion page, a Library, references to the local churches, and an easy-to-read overview of who we are. There is ample space for each church to have its own website in its own folder.

There is also a "hidden" folder called */_members* where you can access a copy of the Constitution. This section will be used to store things which are only of importance to SDBs.

The web address is:

<http://www.seventh-day-baptist.org>

A copy of this magazine is available at:

<http://www.seventh-day-baptist.org/auckland>

ARGENTIAN CHURCH NEWS

Please continue to pray for Pr Jose and Sr Betty Alegre in Argentina and for the church which is gathered there. Sr. Betty Alegre writes:

"Greetings to all our beloved Brethren. Our prayers are with all of you. We would like to tell you about our recent activities.

BARRIONUEVO Branch Church Activities here are led by deaconess Isabel Rodriguez. Meetings are held once a week There are firm plans for starting a church in this place.

MORON CHURCH: Meetings are held: Thursdays - Praise and Gospel meetings, Sabbath afternoon - Bible Study (doctrines and vital aspects of Christian life) Sabbath evenings 7pm Evangelistic meetings (messages are given by different brethren) We get a number of visitors from different evangelical Churches.... We also distribute invitations and leaflets and do home visitations....

Concluding remarks: Our church is increasing slowly but firmly. Of our latest additions into our fellowship is sister Alicia Stubbe, who for the past five months has been working enthusiastically, filled by the love and grace of the Lord.

Sister Alicia met the Lord 19 years ago in a Christian church. However, as soon as she began attending our services and getting to know vital doctrines, such as the Ten Commandments, observance of the Sabbath day etc. she embraced them with all her heart and determination. Her husband Nicolas often accompanies her.

May the Lord help us to find people like her who wants to serve the Lord and to keep His Word.
Blessings to all!"

(Extract from letter published in *Link* April 2000.)



BIBLE COLLEGE STAFF AND STUDENTS

	Name	Spouse	Children	Church
Back Row:	1. Mr Simon D.J. Mhango	Chauncy- Nda	Wyness Chifundo	Dunduza SDB Church Box 992, Mzuzu
	2. Mr Harold Chiwalo	Ellena	Ruth	Mapanga SDB Church Box 79 Bvumbwe Thyolo. Malawi
	Not at College			
	4. Mr Daniel R. B. Wolani			Mapanga SDB Church Box 79 Bvumbwe Thyolo. Malawi
Front Row:	Not at College			
	2. Pr Ron Barrar (Principal)			
	3. Mr Willie T. Njobvu	Mary	Samuel, Davide, Enock, Mercy, Isack, Ruth	Makapwa SDB Church

**Please pray for these men as they train for the ministry
of the gospel to the people of Malawi.**

Gifts to aid the work of this Bible College should be made payable to the Australasian Conference of Seventh Day Baptists and may be sent to either of the addresses below:

*NZ Sec/Treasurer,
Australasian Conference of SDB,
C/- P.O. Box 16029,
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*Aust. Sec/Treasurer,
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